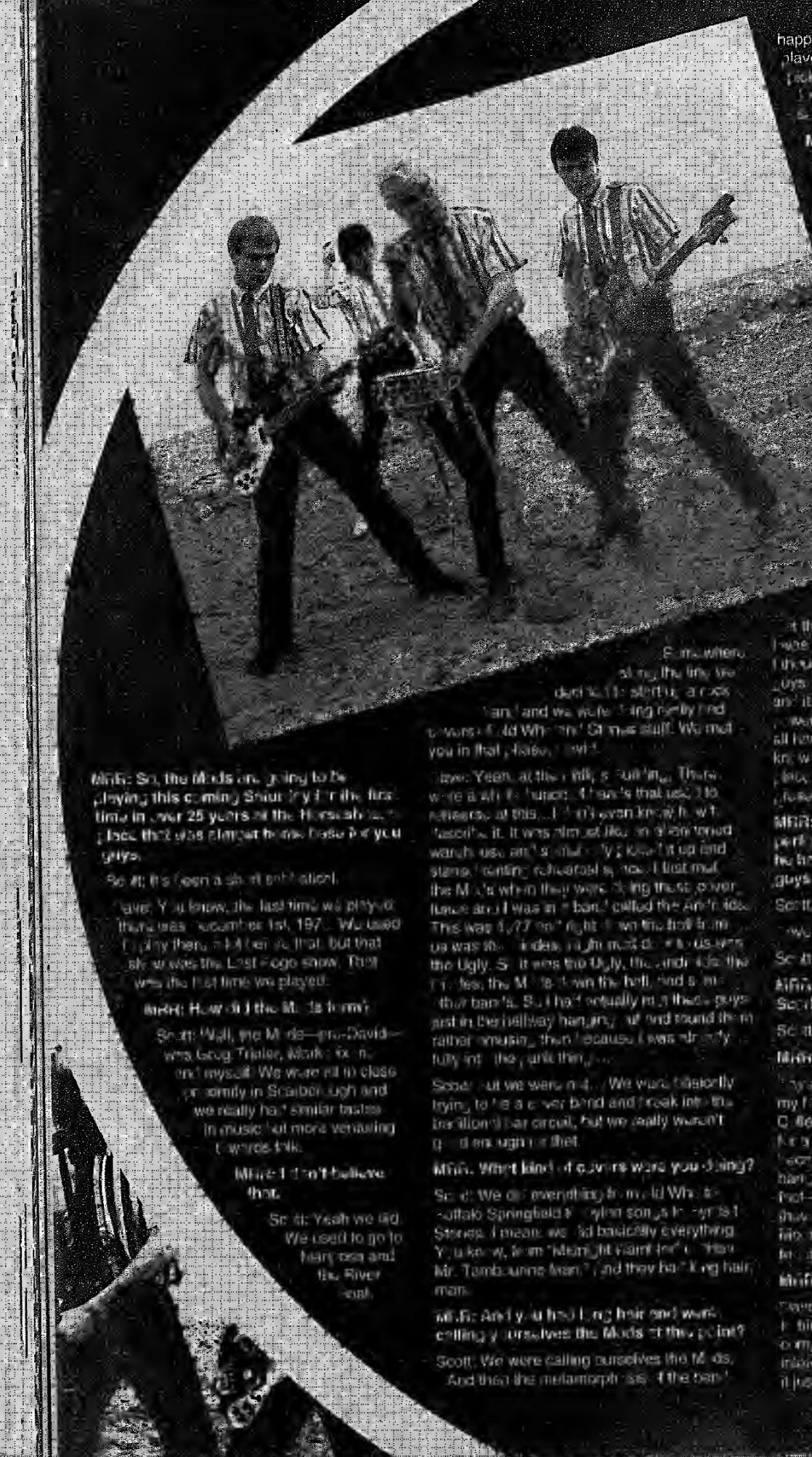


# THE MODS

The Mod's were a four-piece Toronto punk band from the late-70s with a unique look and sound. They added another inspiring dimension to the Toronto scene with the killer 45 Step Out Tonight and the 1985 CD release Twenty 2 Months, both long out of print. There was also, their inclusion on the extremely rare Last Picture Show, and appearance in the obscure Colin Brunton film of the same name. The following interview was conducted by Greg Lick, the singer of the Crum Datus, and Lick, located one week prior to their reunion show, which coincidentally was the band's first gig in almost 3 years. Scott Marks, the guitar player, and David Guion, the drummer, were interviewed on Equalizing Distortion. All photos and images courtesy of David Guion.





**WHITE:** So, the Mods are going to be playing this coming Saturday for the first time in over 25 years at the Horseshoe. I feel that was almost home base for you guys.

So it's been a short political

...and, You know, the last time we played here was December 1st, 197... We used to play there a lot before us, that, but that's about the last Pogo show. That was the last time we played.

#### **QUESTION: How did the Middle term?**

Sean: Well, the Minds—um...David was Greg, Trixie, Mark, ix, n... and myself. We were all so close up, family in Scarborough and we really had similar tastes in music but more venturing in words talk.

Mike: I don't believe that.

Sc. #1: Yeah we did.  
We used to go to  
Mary's Inn and  
the River  
walk.

...and we were doing really bad - I had Wham! Games stuff. We met you in that, Fabio, yeah.

Years. Years at the ugly's building. There were both the humor & the trials that used to reoccur at this... I don't even know how to describe it. It was almost like an unshattered wrench you can suddenly yank loose & it just starts cutting/reheated since I did that. The MC's when they were riding these cover buses and I was in a band called the Anarchids. This was 1977 and right down the hill from me was the "Indies" high school - the US High The Ugly. So it was the Ugly, the Anarchids, the Indies, the MC's down the hill, and some other bands. But I had actually met a few guys just in the hallway hanging out and found them rather amusing, then because I was already fully into the punk then...

Second, but we were naive... We were basically trying to be a cover band and break into the big million-dollar circuit, but we really weren't good enough for that.

**MRA:** What kind of covers were you doing?  
**SC-6:** We did everything from old Who's "Buffalo Springfield" to when sonja K. heard Stories. I mean we did basically everything. You know, from "Midnight Train to New York" to "Mr. Tambourine Man" and they had long hair, man.

MC: Are you holding hair and were calling yourselves the Mods at this point?

Scott: We were calling ourselves the M-4s.  
And then the metamorphosis of the band.

happened. We took it steady as a  
plow, so at the same time we started  
picking up. I remember buying "Aberlady"  
I went into a 15 ft. M and w. when he  
saw the Jam at the C. Krest.

MHF: That was a great theory.

So, it's like, I have married an animal. You know? What this bull means to him? When I do this, do we come? What we are doing, and that's when we really started, I mean, I didn't... I mean, I think I was like, we saw the UJY, we saw a henry and Tim Givens, we threw up, and they're all... What we did is, we had this... like, me and them, in the re-hab, so, now, we had a relationship with our mom and Mark, and... like, the things that were... um, whole relationships and... like, I don't... like, it's something that, we still like.

"That was a real addiction, because I knew them from the Prince's Publishing, and they had long hair and would do things like cover themselves in paint and things like that. They were playing in the Turning Point and they were playing in the Mud and I saw them in the Mud and thought what can this all be about, going on like that, the different events. And then it was like interacting with your own mind, and it was those guys and they ended up in hell-on that stage— didn't know what kind of instrument he had, but it was like the most bizarre thing I ever heard that I had ever seen."

MSRP: Worth Grey was a very unique performer. He had a lot of presence on stage. He had a really interesting voice. Were you guys still in high school at this point?

Schitt's Creek

—W. G. WOOD.

Seite: [Marken / Gründungs](#)

Affix; and which high school is in Southborough did they go to?

#### **So, What Do You Want to Think About?**

More Please, what school did you go to?

...that I grew up at 6 Willow St. in Easton. In '61 my father and I moved back to West Hill. I left the after-Mits; I left, they were looking for a new drummer and they asked me. I'm because I'm friends with them. We used to hang out with them a lot. This is an interesting fact—I don't even know if Scott knows this—but they asked me to join the band before Keith Moon died and I said, no, I'm sorry after Keith Moon died.

What's wrong with a migration?

**Dave:** Yeah, it was flattering to do it myself because I don't know if my mom could have even imagined I'd think through it. It was really interesting because I was 17 at the time and it just seemed like this big, big thing to do. I really



I liked the guys and I liked what they were doing musically and I was really excited about it. We did our first gig September '78 at the Hotel Isabella.

**MRR:** That was the first place the Mods played?

Dave: Well, with me. That was the first gig I played with the band.

Scott: I remember playing the Isabella. I had no idea that was the first one with you.

**MRR:** Dave, you were in the Androids originally as we said earlier with Bart and Sally who originally had a band called the Concorde. When you were in the Androids were you in the Quate first and then you joined the Androids?

Dave: No. Actually, it was the other way around. I was in the Androids and our first singer was Ruby T.

**MRR:** ...who was on the cover of the Last Pogo record, for all you kids trying to figure out who Ruby T is.

Dave: She was really a fun girl. She was Mike Nightmare's girlfriend, the singer for the Ugly, and then when the Concorde broke up, Sally joined us and the band was kind of weird and dark and strange. I didn't love the experience, if you know what I mean. And after the Androids broke up, that's when I put together the Quate. And the Quate were together for three or four months, during the time that I was hanging out pretty heavily with the Mods and getting to know these three crazy bastards from Scarborough.

Scott: That's when I recall seeing you guys at the Bev and Vince was your drummer then.

Dave: I was singing.

**MRR:** Was the Quate a punk band, or...

Dave: Power pop, punk band. You know what's funny is when we talk about punk nowadays everybody thinks of mohawks and pins and this hyper-fast music.

That's not what it was when it started. For us, in '77, everything from Elvis Costello to the Police to Talking Heads to Patti Smith to Television to the Dead Boys was all considered punk. Basically, any band that played simple raw punk music and wasn't caught up in the corporate rock scene was considered a punk band and a new wave band. So it's funny, even the Androids, they had punk-ish leanings but it wasn't punk in the sense that people think of it now.

**MRR:** How did you guys get turned on to punk? Where did you hear about it?

Scott: I think my first experience wasn't going to see punk rock. I saw Patti Smith play Massey Hall on the Horses tour. I was interested in Patti Smith mostly from reading Rolling Stone where they were talking about Patti Smith playing the Bottom Line and all these places in New York and everyone, from the folk scene to every scene, was thinking about Patti Smith. And that show at Massey Hall was incredible. I remember buying tickets and we ended up with floor seats halfway back. I think we were the only two who knew who Patti Smith was. But I didn't know what it was called at the time. To me they were just a great rock band. And then I remember reading the article in Rolling Stone about the Pistols. It was all about their secret tour, the Spots tour where the Sex Pistols were on tour secretly. That article just fascinated me. Talking to Greg and Mark at the time, it was before we had really gotten involved with David, it made sense that this is where we had to go. What we were doing was just not making any sense. It was a slow evolution. We started hanging out at Records on Wheels downtown. Seeing the Jam at the Colonial was definitely a turning point for all of us and we realized we can play this, we can do this. We could probably do it better than some of the people out there and we can write this stuff.

Dave: When you talk about the first exposure to punk or what got us interested, you know

you have defining moments in your life when you remember things especially from your teen years and I remember my first exposure to it like it was yesterday. I was watching a TV show and they had this segment on the Damned from England and they showed them doing their photo session and they were putting brown paper bags on their heads.

**MRR:** That was a single cover for "Neat Neat Neat."

Dave: Yeah exactly, and I had never seen anything so outrageous in my life. That was at a time when rock bands were supposed to look pretty and everything was Elton John and Boston and all that kind of crap, and just to see these guys putting bags on their heads... It was outrageous for 1976-'77. I got interested in it and the next thing I did was pick up a Viletones single downtown—"Screaming Fist." And then I just started buying 45s of all these different bands. I think the first punk album I actually bought was the Dead Boys record, which was one of my favorite ones.

**MRR:** Yeah, the Damned record came out... I think that was actually the first "punk" record and back then especially in the earliest days there really wasn't a lot to choose from. I mean, if you bought compilation records, you had stuff like Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers.

Scott: Or Eddie and the Hot Rods.

**MRR:** Yeah, Eddie and the Hot Rods. Those guys were wearing bellbottoms. They did have some cool songs. "Do Anything You Wanna Do" is a pretty cool track.

Dave: Well, a lot of bands went through transformations just like them...

**MRR:** I was going to ask you about Bookies in Detroit. Tell us about it now. What was Bookies like?

Scott: Still the strangest club experience of my whole life. Bookies was located close to the university, but was also the local transvestite bar.

**MRR:** That always makes for a good mix.

Scott: So it was the university students into punk and new wave, and transvestites. I know my ex-wife, my girlfriend at the time, went into the washroom and

there was as many guys fading the toilets at the stalls with their mini skirts on... Do you remember the women who ran the door that had a shotgun across her lap? I mean, it was just the most bizarre experience playing at Bookies.

**MRR:** And Detroit had quite a few crazy characters running the streets, so...

Scott: We were there for two or three nights and I just remember

**Niggers at the Horseshoe** and it was the same time that the Gary's had the Edge and after that gig the Gary's apparently wouldn't book the Scenics anymore. And I was actually going to ask you guys, I know your guys started playing Larry's Hideaway around '75.

**MRR:** Yeah. Now I think that was the same time as the Edge. Did that run into any problems for you guys? Were you guys putting gigs at the Edge?

**Dave:** No, the Gary's were always really cool with us.

**Scott:** They were great with us. We just got along with them, and I don't think they minded that we played at their place in the beginning.

**MRR:** Larry's is filled up with great rock.

**Scott:** I know. I worked there there. The Gary's show that we opened for was with the Scenics at the Edge in '75. That was just an awesome venue. It was a great night. It was Sunday. It was hot. That's the show that that starts off the early touring days.

**MRR:** Yeah, the Edge in there is like a trampoline. Kind of like the Commodore in Vancouver. Now, the Mode had a very unique sound that was unlike any of the other Toronto bands. How would you guys describe yourselves as being a part of that scene?

**Dave:** I think we were a punk power band. I don't think we were a punk band. We play a lot of music. We had horns, too, and we played very, very aggressively. And I think the punk websites were in there. So, my stretch was with the Mode. I don't think we were a punk band either. We were everywhere in the mid-'70s.

**Scott:** Yeah, we were everywhere. I mean, the punk scene was a major influence as well, but I think the studio stuff was more influenced. In retrospect I see that the studio stuff my brother and I did, I think the studio stuff that was recorded down is kind of punk.

**Dave:** Yeah, I agree.

the  
night, then  
was a bunch  
of people from  
the hotel or the  
bar that came over  
and we're drinking Wild  
Turkey straight, and I  
just remember the one guy  
guzzling Wild Turkey. I was  
impressed.

**Dave:** That's what you inspired.

**MRR:** So you guys played  
Rockie three nights with  
Teenage Head.

**Scott:** The first time we did Rockie we were on our own. The second time was in the summer of '78. We did a number of dates in the States. We did Hurts in New York. Went to L.A., Philly. I don't remember all the names...

...and then to Cow in Cleveland. The place we played in Philly was the Heat Club. The Heat Club was unbelievable. It was all different. It was a cement floor, comment walls, it's really that sort of town and I played there a couple of times.

**Scott:** And then we went to Chicago. The first time we played Chicago was really weird. We played there last, I believe one night and the next night we played, um, night at McElroy's. And then the next time when we played with Teenage Head...

I saw All I Want or from that band was that it was our first gig in Chicago, and it was the first time I ever saw that guy Jim Stefash. Who put out all kinds of IRS records. That really wasn't kind, didn't go with the big name.

**Scott:** What I remember—I have a few memories of Chicago—I remember us being very, very, very, very hungry in Chicago because we hadn't eaten in three days and we had no money because we stayed at Cleveland and I think there was six, seven, eight, nine of us and Teenage Head. At that time Teenage Head were really knocking in "intox," they were starting to tell their stories, but now you got south of the border... you remember the Pirate's Cove? I remember doing sound check and a girl coming out and

telling us if we'd do any

**Bob Seger:** They had no idea. And I think, generally speaking, any of the cities we went to in the States, with the exception of New York, were far behind the Toronto scene. The Toronto scene was really healthy at the time.

**MRR:** Well, you guys were actually quoted as saying after playing New York, Philadelphia, Cleveland, Chicago, and Detroit that you realized how much further ahead the Toronto scene was.

**Dave:** I think that's right. I think Toronto has had periods in its history where it's been ahead of the times and other times in history where it hasn't been, when it fits between other cities in the U.S. or whatever, not yeah.

**MRR:** What other local bands did you guys find inspiring?

**Scott:** Like I said, I was a huge fan of the Gary's.

**MRR:** Where did you first see them play?

**Scott:** The first time I saw the Gary's was at the Horseshoe and I guess what I really found refreshing about them was the fact that you could tell they had some musical background... Jimmy wrote great lyrics, John wrote lyrics; and he had such a great stage presence. I mean, I see they took on country lineage and that was there. It wasn't necessarily at the front but you knew that these guys listened to something other than junk stuff. They were probably one of my favorite punk bands of the time. The Clash I liked as well.

**Dave:** I think all the guys in our band really liked Johnny and the Gary's. I know Gary did a lot and Mark did a lot. Scott and them. We used to play with them sometimes.

**Scott:** I think when we split up I joined a band called Another Side for a while. It was a great experience.

**Dave:** There were a handful of acoustic Toronto bands in those days.

**Scott:** That was the first wave. I don't know if you guys caught anything like Oh These Fools, Z-Man, the Cads...

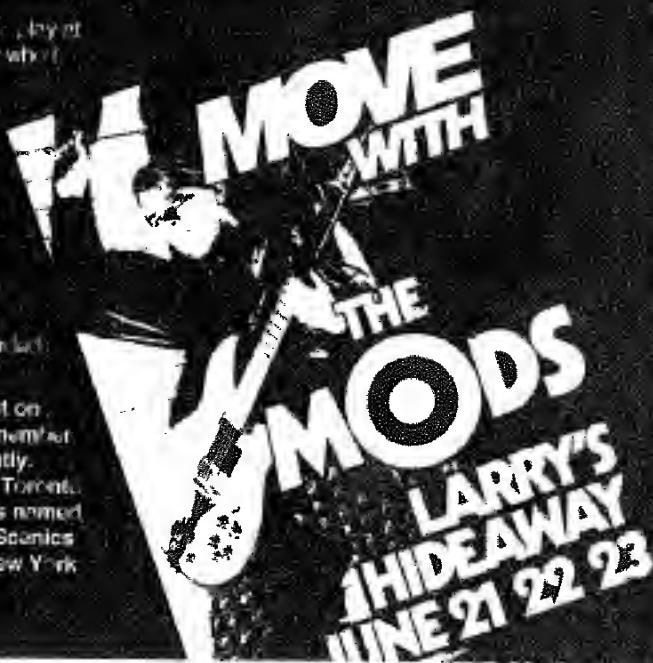
**Dave:** I saw the Cads. They used to play at the new studios. And I know what I really liked was the G. version.

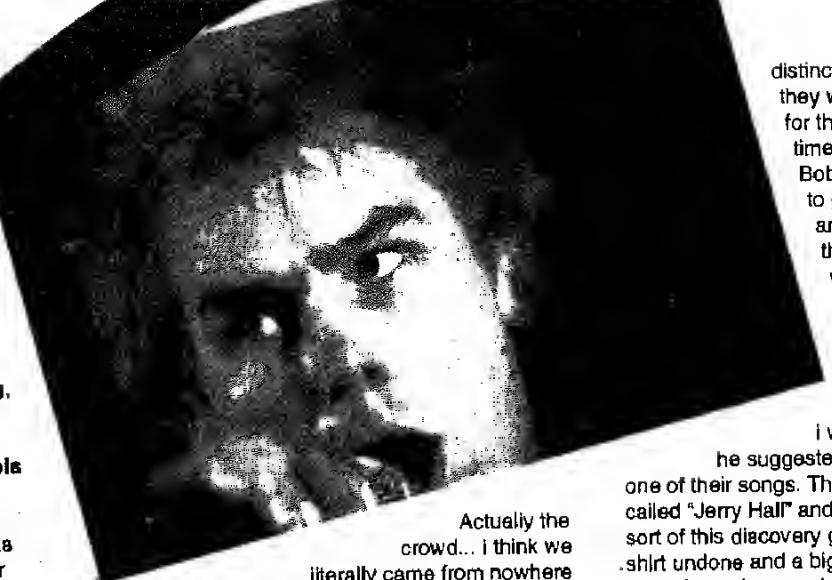
**MRR:** Yeah, I loved the G. version.

**Dave:** I liked Andy Patterson. I thought he was a really interesting character. I liked their songs. I thought they were cool.

**Scott:** The Scenics were an interesting band but... but... I really wasn't into them but I liked their record stuff.

**MRR:** Yeah, they had a record out on Ready Records and actually I've been hearing a story about them recently. There was a concert promoter in Toronto who came up around the late '70s named Louie Leslie and I remember the Scenics opened for a band called the New York





MRR: It was interesting, Mickey De Sedat of the Forgotten Rebels was making fun of you guys in the Last Pogo film. I was wondering what your reaction to that was.

Dave: The Forgotten Rebels weren't good enough to play at the Last Pogo. That's why they weren't there.

Scott: After they magic-markered my house on Main Street. That was the first time I had met the Forgotten Rebels.

We had done a gig downtown and I was renting a house on Main Street. A bunch of people came back there and there was this Johnny Rotten look-alike, who was Mickey of course, and in the morning we woke up and there was all these Forgotten Rebels things written in magic marker all over the house. So he didn't really ingratiate himself.

MRR: But he did go and see the Mods a lot.

Dave: Yeah, we used to see Mickey at Mods gigs and I've always quite liked him. I think he is great and I think their band has always been good and done some good things and he has hung in there a really, really long time.

MRR: They've never broken up. He's a great guy. He's got a sense of humor in him. He used to rub the Toronto people the wrong way. It seemed like it.

Dave: When he said that about us in the Last Pogo movie I never took offense to it at all.

Scott: I thought it was hilarious.

Dave: I always thought it was very funny and that he had a very sharp wit. I never took offence to it whatsoever.

MRR: Your first gig was at the Horseshoe with the Jumpers and the Villatones. How did the crowd react to you guys?

Scott: June '78.

Actually the crowd... I think we literally came from nowhere and people weren't expecting anything and I honestly think we blew them away that night. To this day I have never been so scared. Nicky was on drums at the time. We had just revamped the band. We had been rehearsing for about a month. We had a set. The first song we opened with was "Substitute" and literally I remember us being up on stage and people had told us "You guys looked scared shitless" and we were. We were scared. We didn't know what was going to happen. And we did it and the place, literally, you could see people stopping and turning and watching because we had been playing together for a year and a half. We could play. We were tight. Musically we were tight. We had vocal harmonies. It was a great reaction we got an encore that night. And from there on, Gary Cromier, I remember him coming up and saying "I want to book you guys again." It was immediate. And I remember we drank for two nights after that, we were just so happy about it.

MRR: You guys built up a following pretty quickly it seemed like.

Scott: Within two months. I mean, it was unheard of and it was weird. It was really weird.

MRR: Now, you guys were talking about the Philips Building, the old warehouse where you guys practiced. The Ugly practiced there too and I know Dave, you told me a story about the Ugly, that some of the gear might have been found or borrowed and you were telling me about a few constables coming down looking for Mr. Nightmare.

Dave: Well, it was really weird because the Philips Building was a little refuge for all these bands and nobody from the outside would ever really come in. One day these plainclothes policemen came and they were looking for guys from the Ugly and I remember them questioning Sam and asking whether he had receipts for equipment and Nightmare had sort of run outside and gotten onto the roof and taken off. Yeah, it was one of my memories of that place because I hadn't really seen that sort of thing before. At 17 years old I hadn't been exposed to that kind of stuff.

And I also remember the Diodes very

distinctly rehearsing because they were doing rehearsals for their first album at the time with their producer Bob Gallow and I used to go into the room once and a while and listen to them and kind of watch what a supposedly real record producer would do with the band and their music. The one thing that kind of freaked me out was I was in the room when

he suggested they change lyrics for one of their songs. They used to have a song called "Jerry Hall" and Bob Gallow—he was sort of this discovery guy, you know, with his shirt undone and a big medallion and stuff—he looks at them and goes "Who's Jerry Hall?" and they kind of laughed and they said "It's Bryan Ferry's girlfriend" and of course we all knew of her as Bryan Ferry's girlfriend in those days, and he said "Well, you know, nobody knows who Jerry Hall is so I think you guys should change the name to something like 'China Doll'" and of course they did change the name of the song to "China Doll." That's the way they recorded it, but to me it was always "Jerry Hall."

MRR: It's funny considering how popular Jerry Hall is now, especially with her own reality TV show.

Scott: They were there the first night we played the Horseshoe, because I remember Cato coming down to the dressing room after and he kept looking at me and pointing at his Townsend button because I was playing a gold Les Paul with a Hi-watt amp, which I didn't do for any particular purpose other than I bought them together off a guy used. I'm going "Yeah, well..." and of course it was Townsend's signature thing.

MRR: It wasn't Mike Nightmare, was it? (loads of laughter)

Scott: No, it wasn't. Thank goodness.

MRR: What Toronto clubs did the Mods play?

Scott: We did the Horseshoe, we did the Turning Point, Larry's...

Dave: The Edge

Scott: Isabella.

MRR: No one seems to mention the Cheetah Club much. I know you guys played there. Tell me about the Cheetah Club. Where was it?

Scott: Cheetah was on Isabella almost at the corner of Isabella and Yonge on the south side and it had been a disco. In the heart of the disco era it had been a hardcore disco with the glass tables and these little lounge things. It was as far removed from a punk bar as you could get. You know, going from the Horseshoe, which was your typical beer-swilling place, to the Cheetah, which opened up to some punk bands who immediately started to destroy it. That's what I remember.





would  
stay in  
Chicago  
and Detroit  
and New York...  
It's unbelievable  
we came out of  
it alive. We weren't  
staying at the friggin'  
Weirdorf.

MRR: Now you guys were talking about... Back to the Cheetah Club, you were saying Stiv Bators came to see you play there. That must have made you feel pretty good to have somebody with that kind of a profile would have come and seen you.

Dave: Well it's funny because Bators and Leckie were at a Mods Turning Point gig that we did, and they both came on stage and did "Tell Me," the old Stones song, with us.

#### MRR: Three singers?

Dave: The Dead Boys and the Mods had both done "Tell Me," so Greg and Stiv and Leckie sang it together. But I didn't talk to Bators at all that night. I didn't talk to him until the Cheetah Club gig and he came up to me afterwards and he was so drunk he could barely stand up and I remember him

saying is "You've got to play with me" And I was like "Uh huh." (hesitantly) And he was like "I'm going to call you, I'm doing this record and you'll come and play on it." And I was like 'whatever.' Then I didn't hear from him for five months.

MRR: Then you ended up playing in his solo band and on his album of which you contributed a song "Make Up Your Mind." Did you write it for Stiv?

Dave: I wrote it for Stiv. I wrote it when we were all living in Ohio and writing for his solo album, and he recorded it and then when I did my solo record in 1980 I re-did it. Scotty came in and did guitar on it.

MRR: Beautiful. So you guys kept in touch. Now Stiv, he knew a lot of people in Toronto, so he was close to Steve Leckie (of the Viletones)?

Dave: I don't know that he was close with him. I know he knew him. And Bators had a funny tendency of making fun of people that were very intense. So the more intense you were, the more he made fun of you. He knew that I liked Leckie and I liked the Viletones and stuff, so he used to try and poke fun at me. He used to write letters to me and stuff saying 'How Is Nancy Dog and the V-Tones?' And used to tell me that I should start a band called David and the Quintones. The funny thing is that Bators was much older than me. He was born in 1949 so he is a child of the '50s and early '60s, so a lot of his humor was that kind of stuff. Like plays on words and making fun of you like 'You were in a doo-wop band.' So I think when he would make fun of Leckie, it was all like that. Like in good spirit. I think he liked Steve and I think he liked the Viletones, but the more Bators liked something the more he made fun of it. That's how he was.

#### MRR: What is the song "The Other Side" about?

Scott: Greg wrote the lyrics for that, and that was definitely a song about the hypocrisy of the downtown punks. I mean the reality was... Steve Leckie, the first time he came out to hear us in Greg's basement, we were driving out to Scarborough and Steve's going 'Wow man, like I am out in the country' and of course Steve went to Midland Collegiate down the road from where we grew up. "I'm from the other side." I can't even remember the lyrics, but it is basically you live downtown, you talk like

you're a street person, but the reality is you're just like us.

You're from Scarborough.  
You're from North York.  
You're a poser.

Dave: I think the more I came

to realize over the years, I concluded that it's not where you come from and it's not your education level and it's not the community that you grew up in, it's a feeling that you have. If you have that same feeling, you come together and enjoy the same kind of music and might enjoy the same kind of scenes together. It doesn't matter where you come from. So people who were trying to say "I'm like this and you're not, so you can't be a real punk or you can't be a real this or a real that" it's really just a crock of bullshit. People come together because of what they like. People come together because of a commonality and a community of feeling.

#### MRR: Tell us about your 45.

Scott: The 45 was recorded in late November of '78. A couple of nights at Comfort Sound up at Dufferin and Rogers Road ...

Dave: For \$120.

Scott: We did a basic bad track with everyone playing. We did a guitar overdub then we threw the vocals on it. We pressed a thousand copies with the picture sleeve and they sold out very quickly. They were selling them at the Record Peddler at the time and Records on Wheels. They got around the country a little bit but it wasn't the distribution you could get today. The first time it was ever played before it was released on vinyl was we had gone to see Elvis Costello play at the O'Keefe Battered Wives were opening the show, that would have been November, and Mark and Greg and I went to the early show. He did two shows that night. From there we went over to the Horseshoe and got over there at about 10:00 and the Police were playing the Horseshoe. The first Toronto appearance by the Police

#### MRR: I was at that gig.

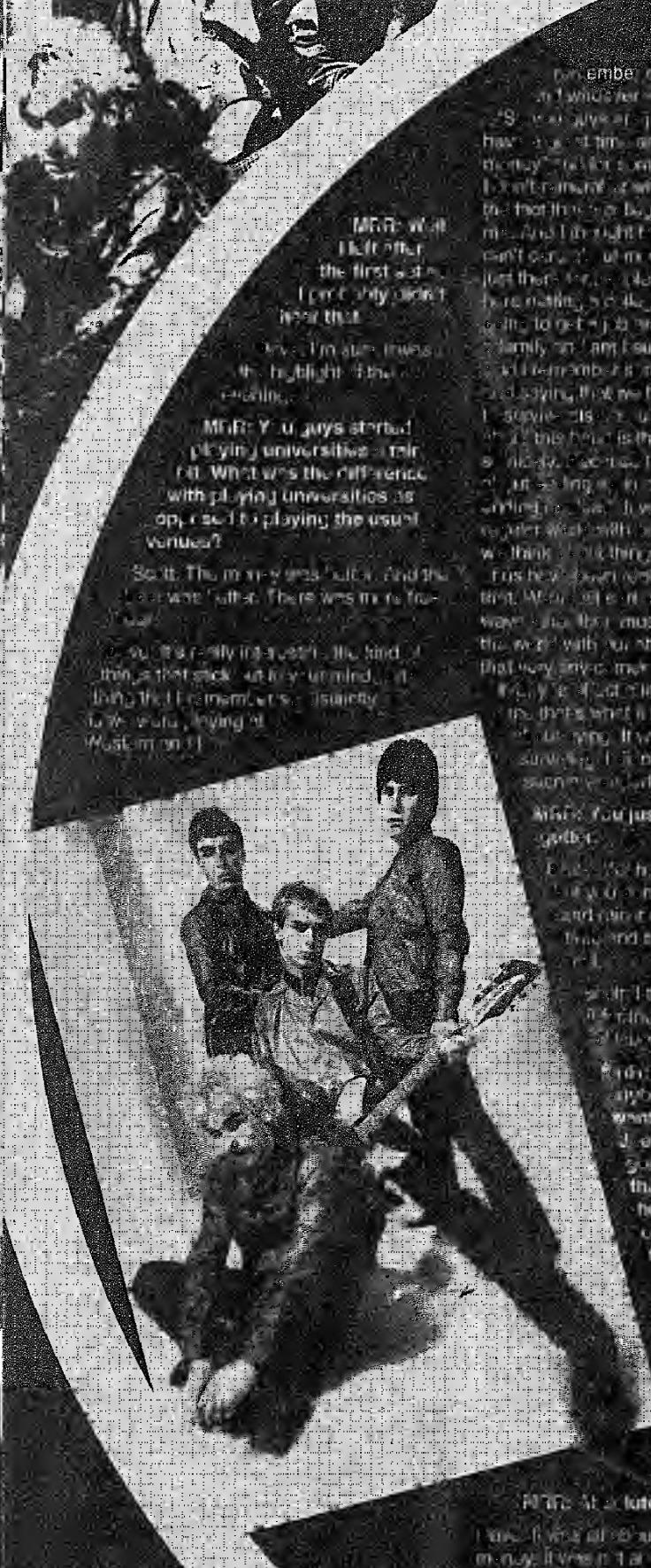
Scott: Well, there wasn't many people there.

#### MRR: It's funny, because the amount of people that said they were there...

Scott: It would have been packed.

MRR: I came into Toronto with my friend John Rudyk to buy a Bryan Ferry album, because records came out a week earlier in Toronto then they did in Hamilton, and we had come in and we were in town that night and we went down to the Horseshoe and there was a little color picture on the door and it said "Tonight from England the Police at the Horseshoe" and we thought, what the hell, we'll go in. I didn't like them. I thought they sounded like Styx because he had such a high voice. There was no one in the place and he had this green jumpsuit on with zippers on it and stuff and it really wasn't my bag.

Scott: The person doing the sound for the Police that night was Nesh the Slash. I went over because I was standing beside the soundboard and he gets talking to me and he says to me "You're in the Mods" and I said "Yeah" and we got talking. Anyways, that night in the Horseshoe they played "Step Out Tonight" on cassette in between the sets for the Police.



MRR: What  
happened  
after the first set?  
I probably didn't  
know that.

Steve: I'm sure there's  
a highlight to the evening.

MRR: You guys started  
playing universities in '81.  
What was the difference  
with playing universities as  
opposed to playing the usual  
venues?

Scott: The main difference is that  
you were "different." There was more freedom.

You'd really interact with the band,  
then go back to your dorm... I  
think that's what's so interesting  
to us about playing at  
Universities.

I remember doing a college radio show  
in Worcester, MA, ten years ago. I said  
"So you guys are just in this for fun and it  
hasn't got any money, and you don't care about  
the money?" and the DJ goes "Yeah, that's true." I said  
I can't imagine what it is like, but I think it was  
you that thought "I love it" by saying that.  
And I thought to myself "Why is it that we  
can't do that? Of course it's success?" And I  
just then I asked "What's the difference?" So you'd be  
making a college student money while  
going to get paid to do it? I mean they had fun  
simply because they could do it in a guitar  
and I am interested in challenging the kids  
and saying that we have to live this. We have  
to approach it as a lesson or the beautiful thing  
about the band is that we have also survived  
so many, many years in this life which is  
not something to be envied. It wasn't though  
"Living the Dream," it was just fulfilling our  
desires which with our innocence of the way  
we think about things... I think that the band  
has been extremely successful in doing  
what it does in terms of achieving success in  
ways that other music that we have involved  
the world with our artistry. In that way in  
that very diverse mix of the world in which you  
are trying to communicate. To me, that's what it is.  
And that's what it was all about. It wasn't  
about trying to prove that they have  
survived. I don't think Sid Vicious was  
survived, but he was.

Mike: You just had one foot in the  
grave.

Steve: You know, in a while, it's still  
about how to give up your life  
and die. But in order to have a great  
life and a future left over, I think

you just have to be really in  
a financial way, not than "I ads  
of tomorrow."

Mike: I never believed in  
anybody that said they didn't  
need money. I remember  
Joe Strummer kind of  
going on about that but  
the next thing you know,  
he was riding in a limo  
opening for the Who in  
football stadiums.

Steve: You know what  
I thought? In all honesty,  
I mean, when you  
get to 21, the idea of  
leaving home is more  
challenging than  
having sex with a girl  
in the south of France  
or something like that.

Mike: At a lot of.

I guess it's all about that, and when I say  
enough if you don't about money I do not, it  
was about money to survive, I have enough  
to live. So if I had money, I'd be fine. The whole  
thing is we are not to be heard because he  
was a fan then as well as his two in his band. I  
remember a lot of gigs where you know of people  
there like, "keep you going. He had  
to say, "I'm not good stuff."

MRR: You guys had a lot of A&R interest  
from major labels and then finally almost a  
recording contract. What happened?

Mike: That was local producer by the  
name of Keith Elshay. He sort of took  
it to 7 and did some demos with us. He  
started his own record label, he named it  
by CGS and we went in and we did some  
recordings with him. The problem was that  
we could really get the right guy to work in  
recording this band. We, of course, had  
been rejected by. Instead, we got this  
kind of guy, a plain off-the-road man. It really  
was sleep writing for us. At the end of the day  
CGS approached us directly and I said  
"We think that we should just sign you guys  
directly." We thought that this was an "A&R man"  
or an executive level and I said them. So  
there was a lawsuit and us losing to the  
whole thing and I think ultimately it got settled  
and the settlement was that CGS stayed away  
from us and then put the studio full of the  
CGS equipment. So CGS would remain  
in the studio until 1985 when he sold that  
studio and he, on our CD, but I think all the  
guys in the band agreed that the last stuff  
that we recorded was John Doe's album and I  
think that's because I think our single  
is probably pretty representative of what we  
sound like at the time.

Steve: Yeah, the early "Issue" [the band's  
first studio album]. We were just really  
on edge. No one knew who you were.  
Everything was kind of like, like they  
were "fucked" because back then, they supported  
you, now they're doing the studio and it was  
all about getting ahead. It was just about a lot  
of money for each for the type of band that we  
are. If look at our years back, it's a big  
figure, but what they should've been doing with  
bands like us.

MRR: So this recording is on the Twenty 2  
Months CD, correct?

Mike: Yeah, it's on all the tracks.

Mike: But it's cleaned up?

Steve: For Twenty 2 we chose  
what we had of material, some from our  
demos and some from that album. It was  
never released.

Steve: Not to heck. I think there are these  
tracks on Twenty 2 Months—"Holding On,"  
"Crying in the Rain," and "Changeaway  
Man"—that we recorded in 21 track but not  
in the album sessions.

Steve: This is weird for Wham! I others.

Steve: Wham! others wanted to do a music  
video early, went in and they were doing it  
in the afternoon, overnight from 11 p.m.  
to midnight, 1 a.m. in the morning. We, which I  
put the three songs from beginning to end  
they partly did one at a time, because we  
didn't "lock in" with them.

Steve: Yeah. And in fact they are more  
representative. I what the band sound like  
then. There are a lot of them from that period  
that has similar complaints. The songs are  
mostly old.

# Step Out

MRR:

Yeah,  
they  
hated Felix  
Pappalardi, I  
think.

Dave: The same situation. They totally cleaned it up, whereas the first album, those were demos done with Genya Ravan and they ended up being their first Sire Records album. It was the same thing. The demos were more representative of these bands than the records that they eventually did, because people were trying to clean them up and make them commercial and I guess that is the only way the music industry responded back then, although the music industry is still horrible and always will be horrible.

**MRR:** Christina Hunt of the Toronto Star wrote an article on April 26th, 1979 saying that "violence, hatred, and ugliness died when punk rock crashed out. In its place are new wave bands like Toronto's the Mods, aiming to put fun back into the music." Do you agree with that statement?

Scott: That's what we told her.

Dave: You know what? I think that as much as punk was the beginning of a whole period of change, people were anxious for it to go away.

**MRR:** But one thing that did change around that time was that you guys changed

your name to the News. Why did you do that?

**Scott:** Well, the whole Mod revival thing was coming out of England. Greg and Mark had gone over to England in that summer of '79 and they had come back and everything was mod. It was like calling yourselves the Rock and Rolls, it didn't make any sense anymore. It was probably the right thing to do at the time but the wrong thing to do in retrospect. And the News was an OK name until Huey Lewis took it.

**MRR:** Did the News sound any different from the Mods?

**Scott:** No, it was a name change only. It had nothing to do with musically, I don't think. It was strictly to do with the Mod revival that was happening in England. It was a name that wasn't going to fly outside of here.

**Dave:** We were trying to distance ourselves from it, but the problem was the name never really took. Like every time we were doing a gig the News was always "formerly the Mods."

**MRR:** I remember that. Times were changing.

**Scott:** There were just more bands coming out that were doing things that were a little more complicated and interesting. I don't think it was a question of punk dying. I think when the Viletones split up and the Secrets formed and Leckie took all the Ugly and created the new Viletones and it was just like they were shuffling the deck chairs on the Titanic. It was the same guys playing in different bands. But we...

**MRR:** In 1980, you guys started getting frustrated. What was starting to happen?

**Dave:** I think the recording was very disappointing for us and the record company shenanigans was disappointing for us and I don't think we had an appreciation at that age for how long it took for things to happen. We were very impatient and naive, it's funny because the same naivete and innocence that made the Mods

such an incredible experience for us and has left us with such good memories is the same naivete and innocence that caused us problems as kids because we couldn't wait. We thought that things had to happen quickly. But you know what? To us, we saw bands like the Police where it did happen quickly. It was like, every step that they took was boom-boom-boom and it was a period of months, not years. You gotta remember man, in those days there weren't old grey-haired 50-year-old farts playing rock 'n' roll music. You did not see that. So guys did have their success

early. Guys did have their success young and they were on their third record or fourth record or whatever. So, it's easy for us to say now that we were impatient, but the fact is that is kind of the way it was back then. That was a big, big part of the problem.

**Scott:** It was the first real turnover of rock 'n' roll too, I mean, finally Lennon and McCartney were getting old. The Kinks...all these guys were getting old and they were moving into different things, and you had the new bands coming in like Queen and all these studio bands that no one could even hope to sound like. It was really what punk was, giving the music back to the next generation. That's my theory on it. No one realized it in the late '70s. Now, I think you look back and you see exactly what was happening—we could not sit down and learn "Bohemian Rhapsody" and play that. We could not learn Steely Dan songs. We just did not have the virtuosity to do it. And when you're 18 or 19, you shouldn't be playing that crap. You should be playing something that means something to you.

**MRR:** Your last gig was at a private school, of all places. Where was the school and how did you get a gig at a private school?

**Scott:** That was our last gig that no one really knew about. What everyone thought was the last gig was opening for Squeeze, and then we went and did this show at the private school. Where was it? Bathurst and Bloor somewhere.

**Dave:** Yeah, I can't remember the name of the school.

**MRR:** Like UCC? Oh, Bathurst and Bloor. There is one just sort of north of Bloor, a little bit west of Bathurst. I've seen that school.

**Scott:** I don't know how we got it. Greg got it somehow. Someone approached Greg at a show and they brought us in and we played there and that was it.

**MRR:** What finally broke the Mods up for good?

**Scott:** Hmm, I think it was Mark's socks. (laughter) I think Mark sort of had enough and you had the offer from Bators.

**Dave:** I had the offer from Bators.

**Scott:** Greg and I were not ready to pull the plug, but...

**MRR:** After the Mods broke up I saw a piece on the New Music where the Numbers were having a party in a basement and Greg was with them. I don't know if he was actually a member of the Numbers.

**Scott:** Yeah, he joined them.

**MRR:** And Scott, you went on to be in the Popular Spies. What about Mark, was he in any other bands?

**Dave:** No. You know, it's funny that when we broke up, it was kind of like me and Mark deciding to do it. Greg and Scott weren't ready to do it. So, it was like a marital couple kind of coming apart in a way. But there was always a strand of friendship that went through us and

Step out tonight

The  
MODS



A couple of singles with them and one of the guys from Blue Ape, which is another band I don't know much about down there. We recorded a bunch of material, most of which came out on singles and then since I've been here with them for three years, I then came back to Toronto and I joined the Mod's and we played for several months in the winter while the Dead Boys went back in the road. The original band Dead Boys was Jimmie Zan, Joe and the Dead Boys and I think that was it. The Mod's, Dennis like, Dick Ash, Sir, that influenced me a lot. And in fact, I think a lot of guys in punk bands were dead pop music fans. Haha, it was just a studio's throw away. We thought it was so dangerous at the time, I knew you had to listen to the Ramones when it sounds like that, you know?

**MRR:** Then you went solo. You released an album on Bonfire Records which has a killer photo of you taken by Rodney Bowers. Listening to the album, it is clear of your love for pop music. Did Stiv and the Dead Boys turn you onto pop?

**Dev:** Yeah— I mean, I always liked pop music anyway. I liked the soft stuff, glam, hair bands like Slade and the Sweet and stuff, but the Dead Boys and Jimmy Zan, I loved the Dead Boys and I think that was it. The pop heroes like Dick Ash, Sir, that influenced me a lot. And in fact, I think a lot of guys in punk bands were dead pop music fans. Haha, it was just a studio's throw away. We thought it was so dangerous at the time, I knew you had to listen to the Ramones when it sounds like that, you know?

**MRR:** You said "the only really beauty in music is the people who make it and the people who listen to it. Everything else sucks." You kind of hinted at that earlier. I thought it was a very interesting statement. I couldn't agree more. There is a lot of interest in the '70s Toronto punk scene now— film projects from Colin Brunton and Blair Martin, the "Funk 'til you Puke" exhibit by Will Munro, an upcoming book by Liz Worth, a photo documentary by Rodney Bowers. Scott, what do you attribute this to?

**Scott:** I think it's actually kind of (laughs). No, I think probably a lot of London and New York had this sort of something going. May I say, but I don't even think L.A. had much going at the time. And I think while that's a very good realization if anything, I think history here that has been unrecorded and partly forgotten needs to be revisited.

**MRR:** What is inspiring you guys to play again?

**Dev:** For me, it was the fact that we have talked about it over the last few years but it never materialized because there wasn't a proper venue or anything. For Michael mostly, it was watching the documentary New York City of Arthur Korn. Watching that film just made me feel like, "You know what? If we were to do this now is the time to do it." We really want to do it now while the getting is good, because the fact is as we get older and stuff like that, it becomes more and more difficult to pull it off. And watching that film just gave me motivation. I mean, they did all of this and thinking now is the time to do it. And Cleve Anderson, it was him who first called me, the author of my scattered wives and Tyanna and a whole bunch of other bands. He is also in the Scorpions.

**Scott:** The Why Cuts.

**Dev:** He had called me, and I said "What the f--- is ever doing?" And I said "You know what? I think we will be ready. We don't have to play three hours."

**MRR:** Can we expect any more shows after this gig?

**Scott:** It's just the reason for it, I suppose.

has been there all these years and that's how we are able to reunite right now.

**MRR:** Now Dev, you started with Stiv Bators and then you ended up in the Dead Boys. Is that correct?

**Dev:** Yeah.

**MRR:** So you met Stiv at the Chestnut Club, and you ended up playing on his record. Tell us what happened next.

**Dev:** When I met him at the Chestnut Club with the Mod's, I really liked the Mod's a lot. I went down first in the summer of 1973 to Toronto and I met

We actually stayed in one place until the same place in London. I just liked staying with Colin; I thought he was a great guy and a really nice guitar player. We did a bunch of gigs together, so then this record was made with the English. When the band was going to be managed by Miles Copeland, Stiv kind of faced this dilemma whether to come back home to Toronto or whether to go to England with Stiv and Brian and I chose to come back home to Toronto.